

BOARD OF REGENTS PRESENTATION

STATEWIDE DISTANCE LEARNING NETWORK

Goal: To improve access to offerings from the University System of Georgia using technology which can deliver courses in a way to reduce or eliminate the traditional dependency on bricks and mortar, place and time.

Reasons for pursuing this without delay include:

1. Meeting the needs of non-traditional students and recognizing the growing demand for updating skills in a fast-changing world economy.
2. Establishing a position for the University System of Georgia in a market that is growing rapidly, and that other entities are vying to capture.
3. Helping the labor force of our State remain skills-current to keep our economy growing.
4. Reducing the pressure on traditional campuses as they face enrollment increases, by delivering courses to the home or workplace.
5. Recognizing the needs of our customers.

University System units have recognized this need and there are some excellent examples in place. MCG uses satellite programming to reach health care professionals in rural Georgia. Georgia Southern offers an introductory calculus course to rural high schools in southeast Georgia. Southern Polytechnic is developing an offering on the Internet to deliver a Master of Science in Quality Assurance. Georgia Tech offers five distance learning degree programs at the master's level and is moving to deliver these via the Internet. Many universities and colleges are working, or have plans, to offer a range of certificate or continuing education programs. Yet we do not have the momentum we need if we are to be competitive, and that is what this proposal is about.

The challenge is to not only use the latest technology, but to develop the needed programmatic content. The budget for last year created a \$2 million fund for a pilot program to allow a number of schools to develop offerings using the Internet. This is now underway and promising results are on the horizon.

Proposal

This proposal is designed to allow the University System to move more aggressively in offerings of distance learning programs through the use of the Internet and GSAMS. The funding will also allow for developments needed to broaden engineering offerings that will supplement on-site undergraduate programs in Savannah and Statesboro. In this capacity, distance learning offers an ideal means to rapidly expand the capacity of emerging programs using faculties from senior universities.

The proposal calls for focus on four key areas: curriculum, multiple technologies and infrastructure needs, coordination and management and planning.

An external evaluation team will be engaged to evaluate the progress and provide recommendations for improvements.